



# NEWS

**For Immediate Release  
November 19, 2002**

**Department of Energy to Begin National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Process  
for the Moab (UT) Project**

(Grand Junction, CO)—The U.S. Department of Energy has determined that it will begin the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for the Moab Project. The Moab Project, formerly known as the Atlas mill tailings site, was legislatively transferred to DOE requiring the remediation of the mill tailings pile and ground water at the site located approximately 3 miles from Moab, Utah.

DOE has determined that remediation of the Moab Project Site and the potential establishment of a disposal site will constitute a major federal action that may have an impact upon the environment within the meaning of NEPA. For these reasons, DOE intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to address the reasonably foreseeable impacts from the proposed action and alternatives.

The DOE Grand Junction Office (GJO) anticipates that the Notice of Intent, which begins the NEPA process, will be published in the Federal Register in late December 2002 or early January 2003. Within 30 days of this publication, GJO will conduct public scoping meetings. Locations, dates and times of the meetings will be announced in the Federal Register. Tentatively, meetings will be held in Moab, Blanding, Green River and East Carbon, Utah.

The scoping meetings provide an opportunity for the public to understand the proposed scope of the EIS, including environmental issues and alternatives for the tailings disposal, and also provide the public the opportunity to present oral or written comments on the scope. DOE will consider all comments and modify the scope as appropriate. A draft EIS will then be prepared and the public will have an additional opportunity to comment on the EIS.

DOE was required to prepare a Plan for Remediation to be submitted to the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) for technical review. A draft Plan for Remediation was submitted to the NAS and recommendations to DOE were received in June 2002. The information that was to be used in a final Plan for Remediation and the NAS recommendations will be addressed either in the EIS or in the supporting documentation.

(more)

DOE will make a decision regarding the tailings disposal after the final Environmental Impact Statement is completed.

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